

Reed	Shaheen	Warner
Reid	Shelby	Warren
Rockefeller	Stabenow	Whitehouse
Sanders	Tester	Wyden
Schatz	Udall (CO)	
Schumer	Udall (NM)	

## NAYS—41

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Murkowski
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Chambliss	Heller	Rubio
Coats	Hoeven	Scott
Coburn	Inhofe	Sessions
Collins	Isakson	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Kirk	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	Wicker
Cruz	McCain	

## NOT VOTING—1

Lautenberg

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The President shall be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Washington.

## MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Washington.

## SEQUESTRATION

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, one of my colleagues recently said something that, after a week at home with my constituents, I am sure we are all feeling. Referring to the across-the-board cuts from sequestration that are just days from going into effect, he said: "When it's in your State or your backyard, it's devastating." I think that is exactly right. They would be devastating for our families, our national defense, and our economy.

But these cuts can be avoided if Congress comes together on a balanced replacement. We should replace the sequestration in a balanced way, and then we should move forward on a fair, comprehensive budget deal that provides certainty for our families and businesses.

I know my constituents in Washington State want to see a deal because if we are unable to find a fair replacement for sequestration, everything, from our military bases to our schools, is going to be affected. Twenty-nine thousand local civilian defense employees could be furloughed. Thousands of Washington students could lose access to Head Start services and basic edu-

cation resources. One thousand workers cleaning up dangerous nuclear material at the Hanford nuclear site could be furloughed for weeks. And Washington State's military bases could face hundreds of millions in cuts to crucial areas such as new aircraft acquisition, research and development, flying hours, and ship operations.

We are days away from allowing these kinds of impacts to begin in every one of our home States. We never should have reached this point, but there is no denying that we have. We are days away from sequestration because my Republican colleagues continue to insist that while it is fine to cut programs that families and communities depend on, the wealthiest Americans shouldn't have to make any further contributions to deficit reduction.

The last few years have been very difficult ones for bipartisanship, but I truly believe all of us know there is a smarter way to reduce our debt and deficit. We can do better than throwing up our hands and permitting these across-the-board cuts to go into effect. And we know the American people deserve better.

That is exactly why Democrats have put forward a credible, responsible plan to replace sequestration. Our legislation builds on the precedent set in the yearend deal, and it is in line with the balanced approach the American people favor. It would replace half of the first year of sequestration with responsible spending cuts and half of it with revenue from those who can afford it the most. Our bill calls on the wealthiest Americans to pay at least the same marginal tax rate on their income as our middle-income families pay, and it would eliminate needless tax breaks for oil and gas companies and companies shipping jobs overseas. At the same time, our replacement package would make responsible cuts. Our bill would eliminate direct payments to farmers which have been paid out even during good times and for crops farmers weren't even growing. As the drawdown from Afghanistan is completed, our bill will make adjustments to our military that are in line with a strong 21st-century strategy.

Our legislation meets the Republicans halfway. It will protect families and communities we represent from slower economic growth, fewer jobs, and weakened national defense. It would allow us to move past sequestration toward working on a fair, comprehensive budget deal that provides certainty for American businesses and families.

My Republican colleagues will say that the yearend deal closed the door on using revenue to bring down the deficit. They will say that all we need is spending cuts. That is not how the American people see it. More than a month after the yearend deal, 76 percent of Americans and 56 percent of Republicans favored a combination of spending cuts and revenue increases to

reduce our deficit. House Republicans have put forward a plan that does the exact opposite. They passed a bill—last Congress, I might add—that would replace only the automatic defense cuts. It would force struggling, hard-working families and seniors to bear the burden of deficit reduction. Their bill didn't even include a penny of new revenue, and it is unclear if it would even be able to pass the House this Congress if they brought it up for a vote.

What the House Republicans offered, in other words, was more of the same extreme and partisan approach that has led American families and our economy from one crisis to another crisis to another. It is what we saw actually when Republicans held up funding for the Federal Aviation Administration, stalling airport construction projects and putting tens of thousands of workers' jobs at risk. It is what we saw during the debt ceiling debate when tea party Republicans held our economy hostage, fighting for fiscal policies that economists across the spectrum said were hugely irresponsible. It is what we saw less than 2 months ago when Republicans waited until the very last minute to protect 98 percent of Americans from income tax hikes.

This strategy, which puts a wrong-headed ideology above American families and our economy, just doesn't work. And Republicans' latest strategy—to just let sequester happen—is even worse. In fact, as tea party Republicans in the House cheer on the sequester, here is what is being produced by companies in States all across the country. This is called a "warn notice," but that is just Washington-talk for what it really is. It is a layoff notice or a furlough notice. If Republicans choose to block a balanced approach to replace the sequester, this is what is going to begin arriving in a matter of days at the doorsteps of workers in our country. This piece of paper, which looks like this, is going to spell serious economic setbacks for our families, for their ability to send their kids to college, and for the economy of their communities. This will be the consequence of Republicans' complete unwillingness today to compromise.

I think we can all agree our workers should not have to worry about political posturing, putting their jobs at risk. Businesses should not have to think about elected officials holding the economy hostage to advance extreme ideology. And families should not have to wonder one month what their paychecks will look like the next month, just because of a debate here in Washington, DC.

So I wish to ask my Republican colleagues to seriously—seriously—consider our proposal. Replacing the sequester with evenly divided spending cuts and revenues—a balanced approach that Americans support—would put us on a path to end this pattern of governing by crisis for all our constituents. That will allow us to get to work